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ABSTRACT

An overview is provided of Hispanic enrollment and staffing patterns in U.S. community colleges. After an initial discussion of changes taking place in postsecondary education, information on the low participation rates of Hispanics in higher education is presented; e.g., in 1978 Hispanics made up 6% of the population of the mainland United States, but only 3.4% of the nation's undergraduate students; and Hispanic college enrollments as a percentage of high school graduates declined from 35.4% in 1975 to 19.9% in 1980. The next section looks at the high concentration of Hispanics in community colleges, which enroll 45% of all Hispanic full-time college students. Information on the exceptionally high concentration of Hispanics in central city community colleges and on enrollment patterns is followed by a discussion of reasons for the relatively high participation rate of Hispanics in community colleges (e.g., the indifference of four-year institutions, the open admissions policies and lower costs of community colleges, the programs and policies of two-year institutions, and the availability of language skills remediation at community colleges). The final sections focus on the lack of information structures concerning what educational opportunities are available and what aid programs apply; the lower number of Hispanics pursuing degrees in engineering and science compared to non-Hispanics; and the large number of Hispanics engaged in transfer curricula and adult basic education programs. (HB)

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# HISPANIC STUDENT AND STAFFING PATTERNS IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Excerpts from testimony prepared by Steve Katsinas for William A. Blakey, Staff Director, House Postsecondary Education Subcommittee. This testimony was presented on July 27, 1982. Mr. Katsinas, a doctoral student in higher education at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois, has allowed the use of the testimony that pertains to Hispanics in community colleges.

HISPANIC ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION: A GENERAL OVERVIEW

There is great debate over the role of the federal government today in providing quality and opportunity of access to postsecondary educational opportunities in this country, but there is no disputing the following points:

1) That the challenges of the future in engineering, computer technologies, and other high-tech fields will require a larger and better educated population.

2) That those who attend and graduate from institutions of postsecondary education generally earn more money, pay more taxes, and are more satisfied with their jobs than those who do not.

3) That presently the federal government plays a significant role in education at both the elementary/secondary levels and the postsecondary levels.

4) That the needs of Hispanics, as the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. population to be serviced by our institutions of education, must be taken into account at all levels of the educational process.

Hispanics, who represent six percent of the mainland population, received only 2.1 percent of all the bachelor's degrees awarded in the 1978-79 academic

year. Incredibly, this figure was up 7.3 percent from the 1976-77 school year (OCR, 1977, 79), despite the fact that Hispanics comprised eight percent of the entire U.S. population, ages 18 to 34, the prime college-attending years. Hispanics received 4.6 percent of all associate degrees, 2.1 percent of all master's degrees, and only 1.2 percent of all doctoral degrees.

In terms of enrollments, Hispanics comprised in 1978 only 3.4 percent of all undergraduate enrollments; of this, most were at community colleges (see table below). By field of study, Hispanics were enrolled proportionally in vocational/technical programs as much as non-Hispanics, but were overenrolled in social science areas and underenrolled in computer science, engineering, sciences, and business administration programs. There is a significant problem, however, reflected in the lower number of transfers from community colleges to four-year institutions of higher education.

**Enrollment in Institutions of Higher Education by Racial and Ethnic Group and Control and Type of Institution, Fall 1978**

| Type & Control of Institution | Total[1] | White[2] | Black[2] | Hispanic | Asian or Pacific Islander | American Indian/ Alaskan Native |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| All institutions: | | | | | | |
| Number | 11,231,172 | 9,194,031 | 1,054,371 | 417,271 | 235,064 | 77,873 |
| Percent | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Public universities: | | | | | | |
| Number | 2,062,293 | 1,807,325 | 102,162 | 36,027 | 42,633 | 9,738 |
| Percent | 18.4 | 19.7 | 9.7 | 8.6 | 18.1 | 12.5 |
| Private universities | | | | | | |
| Number | 718,434 | 600,237 | 44,825 | 17,091 | 17,871 | 2,226 |
| Percent | 6.4 | 6.5 | 4.3 | 4.1 | 7.6 | 2.9 |
| Public other 4-year: | | | | | | |
| Number | 2,833,759 | 2,277,778 | 322,718 | 104,221 | 56,468 | 17,447 |
| Percent | 25.2 | 24.8 | 30.6 | 25.0 | 24.0 | 22.4 |
| Private other 4-year: | | | | | | |
| Number | 1,588,220 | 1,341,883 | 142,050 | 33,014 | 20,869 | 5,541 |
| Percent | 14.1 | 14.6 | 13.5 | 7.9 | 8.9 | 7.1 |
| Public 2-year: | | | | | | |
| Number | 3,873,690 | 3,050,957 | 414,640 | 222,284 | 96,300 | 41,263 |
| Percent | 34.5 | 33.2 | 39.3 | 53.3 | 41.0 | 53.0 |
| Private 2-year: | | | | | | |
| Number | 154,776 | 115,833 | 27,976 | 4,634 | 923 | 1,618 |
| Percent | 1.4 | 1.3 | 2.7 | 1.1 | 0.4 | 2.1 |
| | 35.8 | 34.4 | 41.9 | 54.3 | 41.3 | 55.0 |

[1]Represents the total head count for all races of students in the 50 states and DC, a difference of 31,184 from the total head count of all students because some institutions were unable to identify the race of students enrolled.

[2]Non-Hispanic.

NOTE: Details may not add to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: Nancy B. Dearman and Valena White Plisko, National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education, 1980 Edition (Washington, DC), p. 110.

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Finally, there is a perception held by some who believe that the situation of Hispanics has significantly improved with the intervention of the federal government in the mid-1960's. What is forgotten is that those improvements programmatically were aimed largely at blacks, not at the Hispanic minority. Undeniably, there has been some improvement, although, due to the classification dispute over what constitutes "Hispanic origin," there really was no reliable data on which to judge Hispanic participation (except in some selected areas that were investigated in-depth) until 1975. And, although there has been since 1975 a numerical increase in the number of Hispanic bachelor's degree recipients, Hispanic college enrollment as a percentage of high school graduates has actually declined from 35.4 percent in 1975 to 19.9 percent in 1980. The myth of great progress is thus untrue; the fact is that much, much more needs to be done.

## HISPANIC ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION: THE COMMUNITY, TECHNICAL, AND JUNIOR COLLEGES

Although the percentage of Hispanics in the total population is increasing, their numbers in institutions of higher education are declining, and, moreover, there is a serious maldistribution of those enrollments that do now exist. Only in the two-year colleges are Hispanics enrolled in significant numbers; 45 percent of all Hispanic full-time students are enrolled there, compared to only 27 percent of white full-time students.

There is a high concentration of Hispanic students enrolled in two-year

programs. There is an exceptionally high concentration of Hispanics in community colleges within central cities; in 1978, 21 two-year colleges enrolled one-fourth of all mainland Hispanic students engaged in study in American postsecondary educational institutions.

Within the community colleges, there are significant differences between the enrollment patterns of Hispanics and other students. At the community college level, within occupational programs Hispanics less frequently earn degrees in health services-related programs and natural science programs than non-Hispanics--13 percent compared to 18 percent, and two percent compared to five percent, respectively. Forty-three percent of the Hispanics attending community colleges are engaged in liberal arts curricula, compared to 34 percent of white students. This would seem to indicate that Hispanics plan to achieve baccalaureate degrees by taking liberal arts courses, which are essentially transfer programs. This makes the extremely high non-transfer rates for Hispanics from the community colleges all that much harder to explain (NCES, 1977).

Among the reasons why Hispanic students opt to attend two-year institutions in greater numbers are: 1) they are pushed there, due to the indifference shown to their needs in a programmatic and service sense by the four-year institutions; 2) they are attracted to the policies and programs offered at the community colleges; and 3) two-year schools are open admissions in nature, low in cost, easy to enter and re-enter, and allow the student to remain at home. This is by no means an all-inclusive list as to the reasons why Hispanics attend two-year colleges in greater numbers than they do four-year institutions. By accident or by design, the fact remains that

Hispanic students are attending two-year institutions in greater numbers and that there is a low rate of transfer to the four-year schools. One of the major recommendations of this work will be to call for more research in this very area. Finally, it should be noted that the above-mentioned reasons are not independent of each other. Because of this they will not be treated that way below.

Although the number of Hispanic faculty role models are limited in number (see table below), the colleges are able to offer assistance in the students' native language at many campuses.

1981

Full-Time Faculty
(full professors, associate and assistant professors, instructors, and lecturers)

| Total | Total Minorities | Blacks | Hispanics | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 416,389 | 37,675 | 16,705 | 6,489 | 4,679 |

Language skills are a major reason why Hispanics better attend two-year institutions. Due to the failure of the secondary schools to meet the linguistic and curricula needs of Hispanic students while they are in that system, the institutions of postsecondary education, in order to promote Hispanic enrollments, must offer developmental (or remedial) courses to bring these students up to college level in terms of language skills. The higher rates of delayed education unquestionably demonstrate this: although the numbers of Hispanic and white college enrolled freshmen who are first-time students are roughly equal, 30 percent of the Hispanic undergraduates are classified as "other first year," compared to 20 percent for whites (NCES:

Condition of Education for Hispanic-Americans, 1978). What takes these students longer is their deficiency in basic learning and communicating skills, which requires remediation or developmental learning programs and courses.

Many states have enacted or are moving in the direction of enacting policies on remediation that in effect force Hispanics toward the community colleges. The present trend of the states is to relegate developmental learning programs to the two-year schools, prohibiting their continuance at public, four-year institutions. Calling remediation "the scourge of undergraduate education," the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, an education policy-making group, recommended just that in 1972. This trend toward putting these courses at the community college level would work to keep Hispanic enrollments at the two-year institutions higher and the numbers of Hispanics enrolled at the four-year schools lower.

There are other factors that work together to make the community colleges more attractive to Hispanic students. Many of the colleges are open admissions in nature, allowing successful GED testing to substitute for high school diplomas. Cost of attendance is another factor: the average cost of tuition for one year nationwide is only $509. Additionally, community colleges have admissions policies that make entry and re-entry easier; this is a major selling point for Hispanic students, many of whom must attend school and then work in alternative semesters in order to afford college. In their marketing plans, community colleges encourage Hispanics to inquire about programs, rather than intimidate them (an example of just such a marketing theme can be found in the widely played television commercials for the

Southeast Missouri Community Colleges, which offered "something for everyone at every age" in their 1981-82 advertising campaign).

The lack of information structures concerning what educational opportunities are available and what aid programs apply are very marked in English-deficient student groups, such as the Hispanic. In order to overcome this problem, some four-year institutions have aggresively recruited in Spanish-speaking communities, and offer programs to identify talented Hispanic students, as well as programs better suited to their linguistic and curricula needs. In a time of severe budget crisis at the state level, especially pronounced in the Northeastern and Midwestern states, four-year institutions have trouble affording such programs. Additionally, consideration must be given to the fact that in most states, like Illinois, Michigan, and California, there are first and second tier institutions. Typically the first tier state "flagship" school will do better at the time of division of state funds because it is older and has more friends in the state legislature. Yet these are the same institutions that have higher admissions standards; second tier schools, such as community colleges, the schools whose admissions policies and, many times, whose curricula, would better serve the needs of minority students like Hispanics, are the very same schools that are presently being squeezed the hardest. The national average score on the ACT, a college admissions test widely used by public institutions, is less than 20, while in 1980, the minimum ACT score that could qualify for entry at the University of Illinois was 23. Unless the four-year institutions make concerted efforts to change this situation, Hispanics are likely to be pushed toward community colleges, regardless of their desires in the matter.

This problem is also reflected in the lower number of Hispanics pursuing degrees in engineering and the sciences as compared to non-Hispanics. The first tier four-year institutions are more likely to have such comprehensive and more expensive programs; thus, Hispanic enrollment in such programs is likely to remain low unless these schools increase their efforts to recruit Hispanics at the community college level and below, at the secondary level. The problem of transfer loss and low retention and completion rates among Hispanic groups is one of the major challenges facing institutions of postsecondary education. With the large number of Hispanics in the two-year colleges engaged in transfer curricula, more should be done to bring these students into the mainstream of postsecondary education. One way would be to devise strategies for recruitment and admissions officials at the two- and four-year schools to work more closely together.

Vocational education programs are one of the few areas within the whole field of postsecondary education where the enrollments of Hispanics are roughly equivalent to those of non-Hispanics. There have been some studies done, however, that indicate that the language deficiencies of Hispanics present difficulties in terms of understanding American work ethic attitudes and skills. In 1977, an Illinois State Board of Education study, Survival Skills and Curricula for Bilingual and Spanish-Speaking Students of Vocational Education in Illinois, concluded that:

> ...much impressionistic data relating culture and work, and work survival skills would suggest that the culturally and linguistically different are more vulnerable in the world of work than their Anglo counterparts. This fact suggests that work survival skill training for the culturally and linguistically different is more important than for the population in general. If such skills are to be passed on to this special needs population, it will be necessary to develop or adapt specialized curriculum materials designed for this purpose.

The recommendations of the Principal Investigator, Dr. James Osberg, call for audio visual programs to provide information to these persons, since many of them cannot read English or Spanish, in addition to other curricula development.

Adult Basic Education programs are also conducted on the community college level, and, to a lesser degree, on the four-year institutional level as well. Adult Basic Education includes instruction for the high school equivalency examination, as well as instruction in English as a second language. Hispanics account for about five percent of vocational education enrollments, almost half of whom are Mexican-Americans; 21.3 percent of the total participants in the Adult Basic Education programs are Hispanics. Hispanic participation in this type of program is significant, especially in three states: California, Arizona, and New Mexico all have over 50 percent Hispanic enrollments. Eight other states have enrollments in Adult Basic Education that are over 25 percent Hispanic: Colorado, Connecticutt, Delaware, Illinois, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, and Texas (NCES: Condition of Education of Hispanic-Americans, 1978). Should these programs be curtailed due to budgetary restrictions, the Mexican-American subgroup would be especially affected, because they represent 21.3 percent of the total participants nationwide. Only 279 out of 5,793 Hispanic families speak English at home, or less than five percent of the total families whose heads are involved in these programs (NCES). Twenty-three percent of the participants have five or fewer years of schooling (NCES, 1976).

## CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, there are a variety of complicated, interrelated reasons as to why more Hispanics attend community colleges. Because Hispanics are so heavily enrolled in two-year schools, these schools must be strongly supported. There is a maldistribution of enrollments in terms of both numbers and by field of study for Hispanics. There should be a strengthening of efforts on the part of the four-year institutions to increase the low rates of transfer (from two- to four-year schools), to actively recruit from two-year schools, and to respond positively to the high rate of Hispanic student attrition. Curricula should be oriented to the cultural and linguistic needs of Hispanic students, and remediation programs should be maintained at all levels in order to promote access to all kinds of postsecondary institutions that together make up our diverse educational system.

# APPENDICES

Table 3.30.–Continuance in postsecondary schools by Hispanics and whites in the high school class of 1972: October 1973

| Type of institution attended | Hispanic | White, non-Hispanic |
|---|---|---|
| Attended 4-year college in October 1972... | 78.5 | 85.9 |
| In October 1973 | | |
| Continued 4-year college ..... | 74.2 | 81.4 |
| Switched to | | |
| 2-year college ..... | 3.5 | 3.1 |
| Votech school..... | 0.8 | 1.5 |
| Attended 2-year college in October 1972 .. | 68.7 | 71.4 |
| In October 1973 | | |
| Continued 2-year college ..... | 62.2 | 63.2 |
| Switched to | | |
| 4-year college ..... | 5.0 | 6.3 |
| Votech school..... | 1.4 | 1.9 |

NOTE.–Details may not add to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Center for Education Statistics, National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972, *Fulfillment of Short-Term Educational Plans and Continuance in Education.*

APPENDIX 2

Table 3.24.–Number and percent of Hispanic and white undergraduate enrollment in selected fields of study: Fall 1978

| Selected fields of study | Hispanic | | | | White, non-Hispanic |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | | Percent | | Percent |
| | Puerto Rico | U.S. mainland[2] | Puerto Rico | U.S. mainland[2] | U.S. mainland[2] |
| Total | 114,078 | 345,403 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Agriculture/natural resources | 896 | 1,945 | 6.8 | 0.6 | 1.7 |
| Architecture/environmental design | 261 | 2,068 | 0.2 | 0.6 | 0.7 |
| Biological sciences | 7,114 | 7,591 | 6.2 | 2.2 | 3.0 |
| Business and management | 30,655 | 36,666 | 26.9 | 10.6 | 14.7 |
| Engineering | 3,564 | 8,330 | 3.1 | 2.4 | 5.2 |
| Physical sciences | 687 | 2,606 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 1.5 |
| Other[1] | 70,901 | 286,197 | 62.2 | 82.9 | 73.2 |

[1]The survey did not collect data on any other undergraduate fields of study than the above.

[2]Fifty states and District of Columbia.

NOTE.–Details may not add to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Center for Education Statistics, Opening Fall Enrollment, 1978, special tabulations.

APPENDIX 3

Table 3.25.–Distribution of master's degrees for Hispanics and whites, by discipline division: 1976–1977

| Discipline division | Hispanic | | | | White, non-Hispanic |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | | Percent | | Percent |
| | Puerto Rico | U.S. mainland[1] | Puerto Rico | U.S. mainland | U.S. mainland[1] |
| All discipline divisions .... | 1,000 | 6,069 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Education..... | 311 | 2,667 | 31 | 44 | 40 |
| Public affairs and services .... | 238 | 515 | 24 | 8 | 6 |
| Business and management .... | 100 | 572 | 10 | 9 | 15 |
| Social sciences..... | 29 | 340 | 3 | 6 | 5 |
| Psychology..... | 12 | 309 | 1 | 5 | 3 |
| Health professions ..... | 133 | 175 | 13 | 3 | 4 |
| "Foreign" languages ..... | 31 | 223 | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| Engineering..... | 6 | 245 | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| Letters ..... | 44 | 179 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| Library science ..... | 20 | 91 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Biological sciences ..... | 35 | 74 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| Architecture/environmental design ..... | 6 | 94 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Interdisciplinary studies ..... | 0 | 94 | – | 1 | 2 |
| Physical sciences ..... | 14 | 55 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Agriculture/natural resources.. | 11 | 56 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Theology ..... | 0 | 59 | – | 1 | 1 |
| Area studies ..... | 0 | 48 | – | 1 | * |
| Computer/information sciences ..... | 0 | 46 | – | 1 | 1 |
| Mathematics ..... | 3 | 42 | * | 1 | 1 |
| Other ..... | 7 | 185 | 1 | 3 | 4 |

*Less than .5 percent.
[1]Fifty states and District of Columbia.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Center for Education Statistics and Office for Civil Rights, Earned Degrees Survey, 1976-77, special tabulations.

APPENDIX 4

Table 3.34.–Hispanic doctoral degree recipients, by U.S. citizenship (including Puerto Ricans) and by field of study: Fiscal years 1973–1976

| Field of study[1] | Total[2] Hispanic | Hispanic, U.S. citizens | | | | Hispanic, non-U.S. citizens | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Total | | Puerto Rican[3] | | Permanent visa (Number) | Temporary visa (Number) |
| | | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | | |
| All fields of study . . | 1,458 | 1,069 | 73 | 224 | 15 | 92 | 297 |
| Education . . . . . | 367 | 341 | 93 | 66 | 18 | 10 | 16 |
| Social science . . . . . | 129 | 100 | 78 | 21 | 16 | 7 | 22 |
| Psychology . . . . . | 96 | 90 | 94 | 29 | 30 | 3 | 3 |
| Arts/humanities . . . . . | 297 | 242 | 81 | 33 | 11 | 38 | 17 |
| Physical sciences . . . . . | 115 | 66 | 57 | 14 | 12 | 11 | 38 |
| Mathematics . . . . . | 47 | 24 | 51 | 5 | 11 | 2 | 21 |
| Life sciences . . . . . | 264 | 124 | 47 | 29 | 11 | 12 | 128 |
| Engineering . . . . . | 99 | 44 | 44 | 17 | 17 | 7 | 48 |
| Professional fields . . . . | 43 | 37 | 86 | 10 | 23 | 2 | 4 |
| Other fields . . . . . | 1 | 1 | 100 | – | – | – | – |

[1]Includes doctor's degrees awarded by the University of Puerto Rico.
[2]Total does not include 8 Hispanic doctoral recipients who did not report their citizenship.
[3]This is a breakout of U.S. citizens of Puerto Rican origin, born either in Puerto Rico or on the mainland. Puerto Rican is the only subgroup which could be reliably separated from the data.
NOTE.–Details may not add to totals because of rounding.
SOURCE: National Research Council, Commission on Human Resources, *Women and Minority Ph.D.'s in the 1970's*, Dorothy Gilford and Joan Snyder, 1977.

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